

which the Senate is now working is the solution our economy needs, it is the solution immigrant families need, and it is the solution Anna needs.

This bill isn't perfect. That is the nature of legislating. Compromise is necessary and inevitable. But this measure takes important steps to reform our broken legal immigration system, strengthen border security, and hold unscrupulous employers accountable.

Over the next 3 weeks Senators will propose a number of ideas to make the legislation better. Some will offer ideas to make it worse. But those suggestions must preserve the heart of the bill—a pathway to earned citizenship that begins by going to the back of the line, paying taxes and fines, learning English, and getting right with the law. Whether we are Democrats or Republicans, whether we are from red States or blue States, we can all agree that the current system is broken. We can all agree on the need for action. This bipartisan legislation is our best chance in many, many years to bend the system toward it working right. We need to mend this broken system.

The Senate is about to engage in this important debate about the kind of country we are and must continue to be. This Nation was founded on the promise that success should not be an accident of birth but, rather, a just reward for hard work and determination. It is no wonder so many people from so many nations wish to share that promise, but they can't all get the promise of coming to America, and that is what this legislation is all about.

The United States has always welcomed immigrants, and that is never going to change. For those like Anna, the words of the Jewish proverb are appropriate: Dreams do not die. Therefore, it is up to us to help fulfill those dreams and fix our broken immigration system.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KAINE). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

BORDER SECURITY, ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY, AND IMMIGRATION MODERNIZATION ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 744, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to calendar No. 80, S. 744, a bill to provide comprehensive immigration reform, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 5 p.m. will be divided, with the Senator from Alabama or his designee controlling 2 hours and the Senator from Vermont or his designee controlling the remaining time.

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, when the Senate Judiciary Committee held lengthy and extensive markup sessions to consider the Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act, or S. 744—the bill before us—we worked late into the evenings debating the bill. We considered hundreds of amendments. But what was interesting and what we heard the most about was the fact that the public was able to witness our consideration firsthand. They saw all our proceedings streamed live on the committee's Web site and broadcast on C-SPAN. We made available on our website proposed amendments, and reported developments in real time throughout the committee process. I know this made a difference because I was receiving e-mails and calls from all over the country from people watching it. Whether they agreed or disagreed on a particular matter, they said how much it meant to them to actually know what the Senate was doing. And Members from both sides of the aisle praised the transparent process and the significant improvements in the bill made by the Judiciary Committee.

The bill, as we amended it, was passed out of committee by a bipartisan two-thirds majority. Again, everybody worked together, set politics aside, and allowed the American people to see what we were doing. In many ways this is how we did it when I first came to the Senate, except we didn't have a way of streaming things live and we didn't have C-SPAN, so it is even more transparent now.

I appreciate what President Obama said this weekend about immigration reform. I agree with him that we have to move in a timely way. Of course, the time is now for the Senate to act, so I hope we can take some of the same steps in the Chamber that we took in the Judiciary Committee during our debate of this legislation to have an efficient and transparent process. After all, look at the markup of the Senate Judiciary Committee: both parties—and it goes across the political spectrum as well as geographically, from the west coast to the east coast, from southern borders to our northern borders.

During our committee consideration last month, an editorial in the Barre Montpelier Times termed our proceedings a "lesson in democracy." Our committee proceedings demonstrated to the American people and the world how the Senate can and should fulfill its responsibilities despite our differences.

The ranking Republican on the committee, the senior Senator from Iowa, and I were on different sides of the legislation, but we were able to work well together. I hope we can continue to work here on the Senate floor in a bipartisan way. Although he voted against the bill, the senior Senator from Iowa said had his vote been necessary to report the bill to the Senate,

he would have voted to do so. I appreciate that sentiment, and I look forward to his cooperation.

I have proposed to Senator GRASSLEY, who as the ranking Republican on the Judiciary Committee will be managing the bill for the minority, that we try to replicate here in the Senate the fair and transparent process we were able to achieve in the committee. To that end, once the Senate is able to proceed to the bill, I suggest we establish a filing deadline for amendments, as we did at the outset of our committee consideration. Ideally, then we will be able to take these amendments and group them and thereby work together by issue and by titles, as we did in the committee. It makes it a lot easier for the public as well as for the Senate to know what we are doing on the bill. It will help us with the Senate's timely consideration of this important legislation.

Of course, in order for Senators to be able to file amendments and work on the bill, the Senate has to proceed to the bill. Republicans and Democrats worked together to develop this legislation. Senators from both sides of the aisle, including the Senator from Alabama, who has already spoken on the Senate floor at length about this legislation, had amendments adopted in committee. Almost none of the more than 135 amendments adopted by the Judiciary Committee were adopted on party-line votes. So we should be able to work together to ensure consideration of amendments and then proceed to a vote on final passage without filibusters.

The American people want us to vote yes or no, up or down. They do not want us to add delaying tactics that allow us to say, well, maybe we would have been for it or maybe we would have been against it. They expect more of their Senators. Vote yes or no.

I had hoped the Senate would turn immediately to the consideration of amendments to this important bill. I regret that tomorrow afternoon, instead, we will vote on cloture on a procedural motion to allow us to begin debate on the bill. The legislation before us is the result of a bipartisan group of Senators who came together and made an agreement. It was initially a proposal from the so-called Gang of 8. It came through the committee process a product of a group of 18, supported by a bipartisan majority of the Judiciary Committee.

If Senators who have come together to help develop this bill keep their commitments, I have no doubt we will be able to end this unnecessary filibuster and pass this fair but tough legislation on comprehensive immigration reform.

There is broad agreement that our Nation's immigration system is broken and is in need of a comprehensive solution. There is also broad agreement in this Nation that people are tired of unnecessary delays in the Senate. They would like to see us do the work we are